REPUBLIC, TOLD REPORTERS IN THIS CAPITAL CITY THAT THE PLANNING WITH FRANCE AND THE AFRICAN STATES WAS A WELL-KEPT SECRET.

''NONE OF THOSE AFRICAN LEADERS WHO KNEW WHAT WAS AFOOT SAID ANYTHING,'' PRESIDENT DACKO SAID.

''I RETURNED TO BANGUI FROM LIBREVILLE (CAPITAL OF GABON) ON THURSDAY EVENING TO MAKE THE PROCLAMATION OF THE ABOLITION OF THE EMPIRE AND THE RESTORATION OF THE REPUBLIC.

''WITHIN HOURS IT WAS ALL OVER.''

FRENCH TROOPS WERE FLOWN TO BANGUI AFTER PRESIDENT DACKO CALLED FOR THEM IN HIS FIRST SPEECH FOLLOWING THE COUP.

''WE WERE COUNTING FIRST AND FOREMOST ON OUR GOOD FRENCH FRIENDS,'' THE PRESIDENT SAID TODAY.

''OUR FIRST PRIORITY IS TO RESTORE DEMOCRACY, TO LET THE PEOPLE, SO LONG OPPRESSED, LIVE THEIR LIVES FREELY. THIS WE WILL DO.''

MORE 0938

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/ CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY RLS DATE 10/5/82
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. CLASS (S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ DECLASSABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

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PM-COUP-DACKO 2 BANGUI

THE MEN OF BOKASSA'S HEAVILY-ARMED IMPERIAL GUARD DECLARED THEIR LOYALTY TO THE NEW PRESIDENT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE COUP WAS ANNOUNCED.

THE REGULAR ARMY HAD BEEN VIRTUALLY WITHOUT WEAPONS OR AMMUNITION.

RESIDENTS OF BANGUI SEEMED TO REGARD THE NEWLY ARRIVED FRENCH SOLDIERS AS LIBERATORS, EXPRESSING RELIEF THAT THEY HAD COME.

SEATED IN THE ELEGANT PRESIDENTIAL PALAIS DE LA RENAISSANCE, MR DACKO SAID HE HAD FREED ALL POLITICAL (illegible) STILL HELD IN BANGUI'S NOTORIOUS NGARAGBA PRISON AFTER ALMOST 14 YEARS OF THE BOKASSA DICTATORSHIP.

''THERE WERE ONLY 20 LEFT, WHOM I FREED,'' HE SAID.

''GOD KNOWS WHERE THE OTHERS HAVE DISAPPEARED. BUT THERE WERE HUNDREDS OF THEM OVER THE YEARS.''

AS PRESIDENT DACKO SPOKE, FRENCH TROOPS PATROLLED THE STREETS OF BANGUI AFTER BEING RUSHED IN TO KEEP ORDER FOLLOWING THE BLOODLESS THURSDAY NIGHT COUP.

THE CAPITAL WAS QUIET AND THERE WAS NO REPETITION OF THE LOOTING THAT OCCURRED YESTERDAY.

MORE 0940